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SPIRAL ZONE™
LOOKING FOR DIRK COURAGE™?
HE'S DEAD!
DC COMICS AREN'T JUST FOR KIDS!
DIRK™
KAT™
HIRO™
MAX™
TANK™

SPIRAL ZONE
The FLIGHT of the ALBATROSS
HEH HEHHH! MY PLAN IS PROCEEDING PERFECTLY, EXACTLY AS I ENVISIONED.
MY HENCHMEN HAVE BEEN QUIETLY CONQUERING TINY PARCELS OF LAND IN REMOTE AREAS OF THE WORLD, AND USING THEM AS CONSTRUCTION SITES FOR HARMLESS-LOOKING GIANT STATUES OF MYSELF AND MY BLACK WIDOWS.
THE MONUMENT TO MYSELF, IN THE ARCTIC, IS ALREADY FINISHED. THE OTHER STATUES WILL BE COMPLETED SOON.
ONCE THEY ARE, MY DREAM OF A PERFECT WORLD ORDER WILL BE AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT!
MICHAEL FLEISHER . CARMINE INFANTINO . DON HECK . DICK GIORDANO
story / layouts / pencils / inks
JOHN COSTANZA . HELEN VESIK . JOEY CAVALIERI . JOE ORLANDO
letters / colors / editor / executive editor

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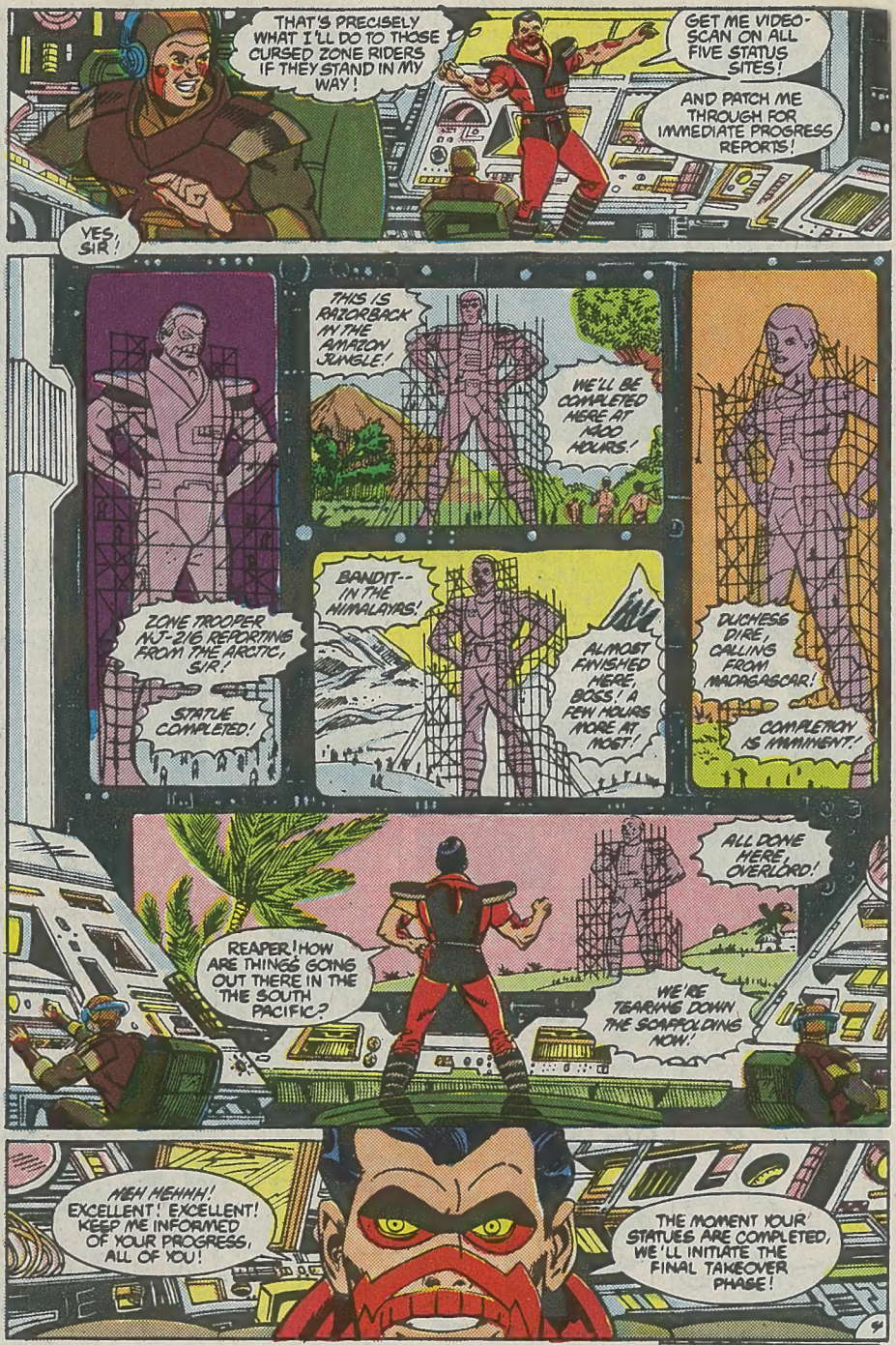
...IT'S A DREAM THAT SPENT LONG YEARS WAITING TO BE FULFILLED..
"...LONG YEARS...SINCE MY CHILDHOOD!"
JAMES! CAN'T YOU PULL YOUR NOSE OUT OF THAT BORING PHYSICS BOOK?
MUST YOU BE SUCH A HOPELESS BOOKWORM?
I-I DON'T KNOW WHY...I'M SORRY..
WHY CAN'T YOU EVEN TRY TO BE MORE LIKE YOUR BIG BROTHER PAUL?
PAY CLOSE ATTENTION NOW, JAMES.
THE MOMENT WE'RE AIRBORNE, I'M GOING TO TURN CONTROLS OF THIS MODIFIED F-19 OVER TO PAUL.
HEAR THAT, WIMP?
I'M GONNA SHOW YOU HOW A REAL TOP GUN JOCKEYS A PLANE!
SHE'S ALL YOURS, SON.
HA HA! OKAY, DAD!
2

DOOMED? NO! P-PLEASE! SAVE ME!
I DON'T WANTA DIE!
HA HAAA! THE LITTLE WIMP NEARLY TURNED WHITE WITH FRIGHT THAT TIME, HUH, DAD?
THAT WAS AN ABSOLUTELY FLAWLESS TRIPLE LOOP, PAUL! I'M DARNED PROUD!
SO PROUD, IN FACT--
DAD! SOMETHING'S WRONG!
SHE'S OUT OF CONTROL!
--THAT AS SOON AS I'VE LOGGED YOU IN WITH THE TOWER--
--I'M GOING TO LET YOU TAKE THAT BIRD UP FOR YOUR FIRST SOLO FLIGHT!
SOLO? WOW!!
SOLO, EH? GOOD THING I MEMORIZED THE F-19'S BLUEPRINTS THAT DAY DAD BROUGHT THEM HOME.
TOO LATE TO EJECT! I'M AFRAID WE'RE DOOMED, SON!
MOMENTS LATER...
PERFECT TAKEOFF, EH, JAMES?
YEAH.
BOOOOOMM
GOOD LORD!
PERFECT LANDING, TOO!
HEH HEHHH! YES, IT WAS PERFECT!

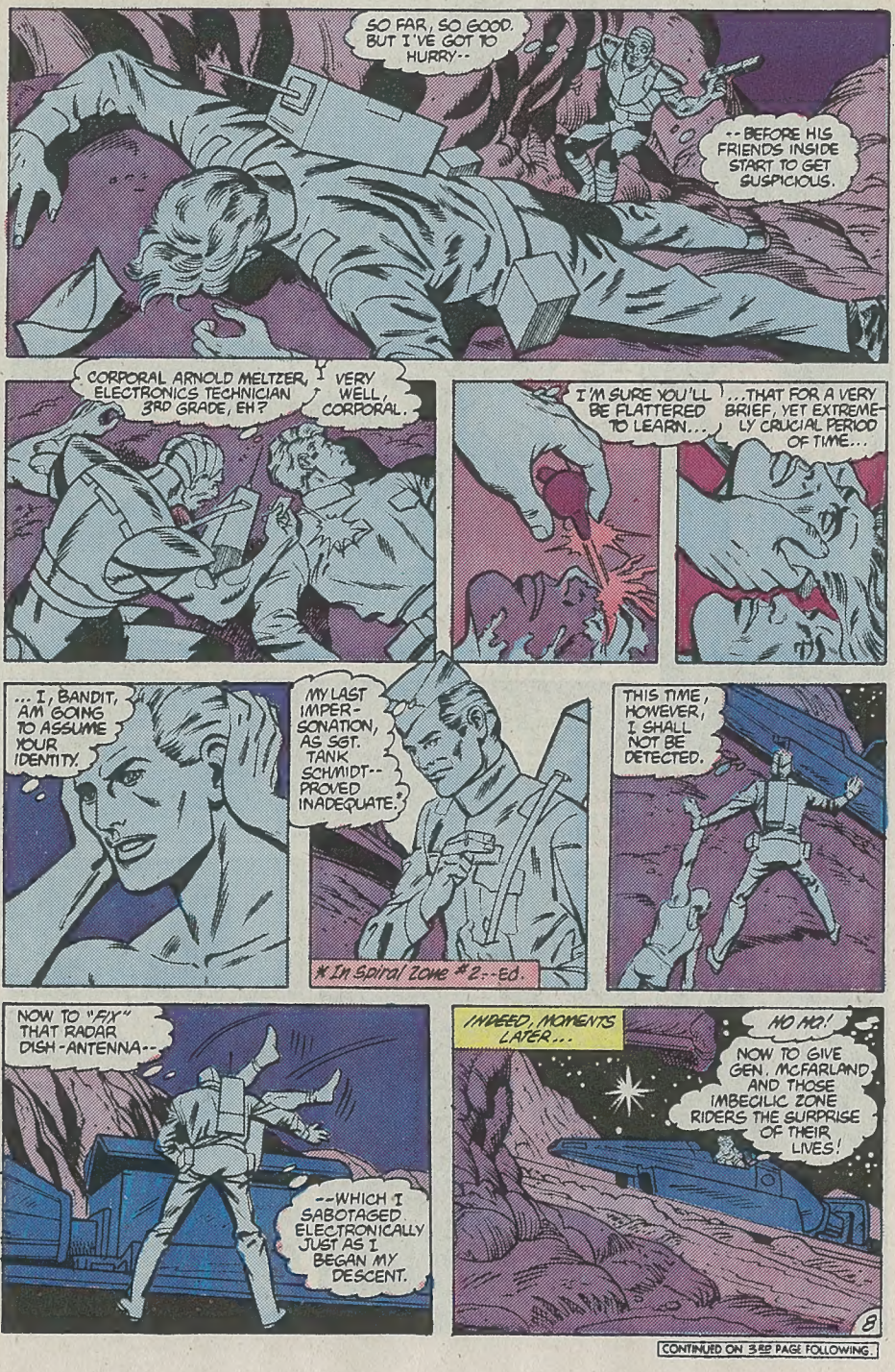

THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I'LL DO TO THOSE CURSED ZONE RIDERS IF THEY STAND IN MY WAY!
GET ME VIDEO-SCAN ON ALL FIVE STATUS SITES!
AND PATCH ME THROUGH FOR IMMEDIATE PROGRESS REPORTS!
YES, SIR!
ZONE TROOPER NJT-216 REPORTING FROM THE ARCTIC, SIR!
STATUE COMPLETED!
THIS IS RAZORBACK IN THE AMAZON JUNGLE!
WE'LL BE COMPLETED HERE AT 1000 HOURS!
BANDIT-- IN THE HIMALAYAS!
ALMOST FINISHED HERE, BOSS! A FEW HOURS MORE AT MOST!
DUCHESS DIRE, CALLING FROM MADAGASCAR!
COMPLETION IS IMMINENT!
ALL DONE HERE OVERLORD!
REAPER! HOW ARE THINGS GOING OUT THERE IN THE THE SOUTH PACIFIC?
WE'RE TEARING DOWN THE SCAFFOLDING NOW!
MEH MEHHH! EXCELLENT! EXCELLENT! KEEP ME INFORMED OF YOUR PROGRESS, ALL OF YOU!
THE MOMENT YOUR STATUES ARE COMPLETED, WE'LL INITIATE THE FINAL TAKEOVER PHASE!

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

MEANWHILE, DEEP WITHIN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN HQ OF MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL, THE MULTINATIONAL COMMAND ORGANIZED TO COMBAT THE SPIRAL ZONE MENACE...
AND THIS, ZONE RIDERS, IS THE HIGH-POWERED ROCKET THAT WILL CARRY OUR ALBATROSS SPY SATELLITE HIGH INTO EARTH ORBIT--
--ENABLING US TO ACHIEVE CLOSEUP SCRUTINY OF OVERLORD'S MONUMENTAL STATUES!
MY OWN OPINION, COMMANDER COURAGE, IS THAT YOUR GRAVE SUSPICIONS CONCERNING THESE COLOSSAL STATUES WILL PROVE UNFOUNDED! BUT IF ANYTHING IS AMISS--
--ALBATROSS'S HIGH-INTENSITY LASER, X-RAY, AND INFRARED CAPABILITIES WILL FERRET IT OUT!
THANK YOU, GENERAL.
SOMEHOW, I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE THAT EVEN AN EGOMANIAC LIKE OVERLORD WOULD BE COMMITTING ALL THOSE RESOURCES TO THAT STATUE PROJECT JUST TO FLATTER HIS VANITY!
ISN'T THERE ANY WAY THE ALBATROSS COULD HELP US LOCATE TANK, COMMANDER?
I'M AFRAID NOT, KAT.
THE SPIRAL ZONE EXTENDS OVER HALF THE EARTH'S SURFACE, REMEMBER?
WHICH MEANS TANK COULD BE PRACTICALLY ANYWHERE!
ALL WE CAN DO IS PRAY HE GETS OUT ON HIS OWN.
5

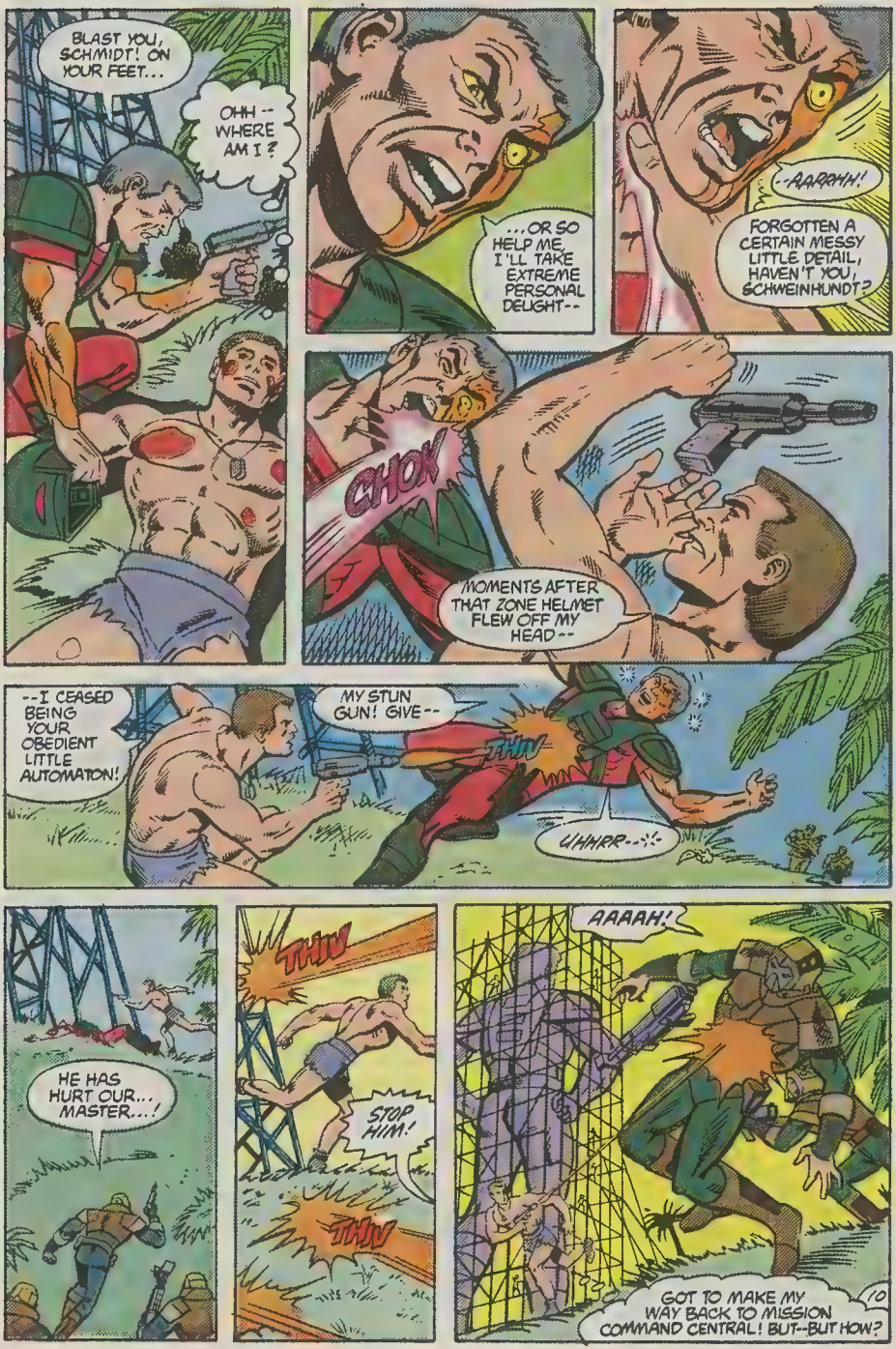
MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE EMERALD-GREEN VASTNESS OF THE AMAZON JUNGLE...
YOU!! TANK SCHMIDT! PAY ATTENTION, SLAVE!
YES... MASTER RAZOR-BACK...!
YOU'D MUCH RATHER BE MY SLAVE THAN A ZONE RIDER, WOULDN'T YOU, SGT. SCHMIDT?
I AM YOURS TO COMMAND... MASTER...!
HA HA! THAT'S RIGHT! AND SO LONG AS YOU WEAR THAT SPECIAL ZONE HELMET, YOU'RE COMPLETELY UNDER MY MENTAL CONTROL!
WANT TO SEE ME PROVE IT, SERGEANT? GO AHEAD, THEN! DO SOME CARTWHEELS!
YES... MASTER...!
HA HA! AND KEEP ON DOING THEM UNTIL YOU HIT THE WALL!
AS YOU WISH... MASTER...!
I AM.
...YOURS TO...
...COMM...
UHHGHH!!
HA HA HA HA HA HA!
6

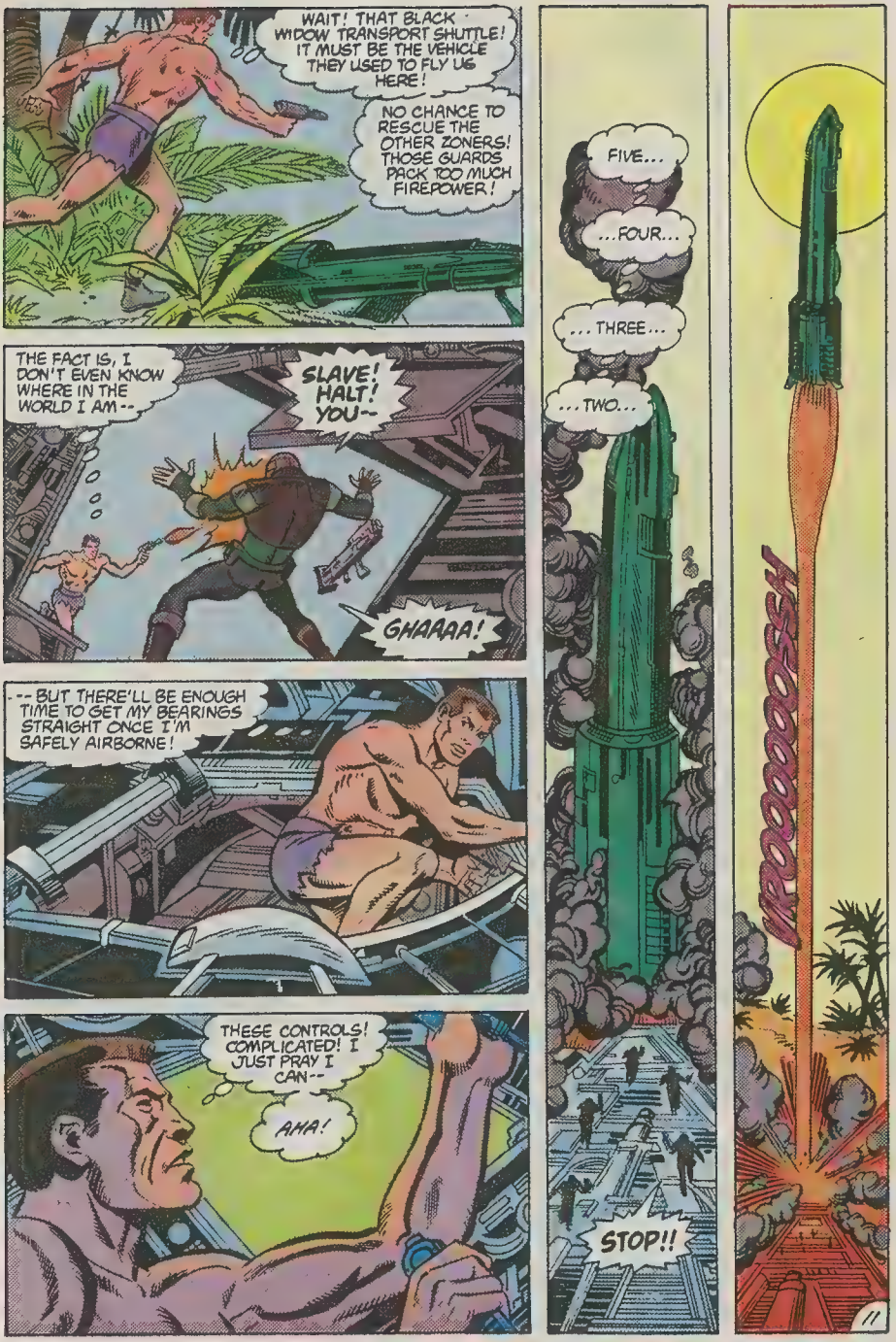
HOURS LATER, A SINISTER PARACHUTIST DESCENDS GRACEFULLY TOWARD THE MOUNTAINTOP STRONGHOLD OF MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL...
WHILE DEEP WITHIN THE SPRAWLING COMMAND POST...
UH-OH! SCREEN SEVEN'S ON THE FRITZ AGAIN--NOTHING BUT SNOW!
NO SWEAT! I'LL FIX IT!
IT'S JUST THAT BLASTED DISH AGAIN!
BEEN GIVING US GRIEF EVER SINCE WE INSTALLED IT!
PRETTY IMPORTANT PIECE OF HARDWARE, THOUGH...
... BECAUSE WHENEVER IT'S INOPERATIVE...
...WE PRETTY MUCH GO BLIND ON ANY-THING COMING AT US TOWARD THE SOUTHEAST RIDGE.
STILL, IT--
THIN!
AAAA--!
7


SO FAR, SO GOOD. BUT I'VE GOT TO HURRY--
--BEFORE HIS FRIENDS INSIDE START TO GET SUSPICIOUS.
CORPORAL ARNOLD MELTZER, ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN 3RD GRADE, EH?
VERY WELL, CORPORAL.
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE FLATTERED TO LEARN...
...THAT FOR A VERY BRIEF, YET EXTREMELY CRUCIAL PERIOD OF TIME...
... I, BANDIT, AM GOING TO ASSUME YOUR IDENTITY.
MY LAST IMPERSONATION, AS SGT. TANK SCHMIDT-- PROVED INADEQUATE.
* In Spiral Zone #2--Ed.
THIS TIME, HOWEVER, I SHALL NOT BE DETECTED.
NOW TO "FIX" THAT RADAR DISH-ANTENNA--
--WHICH I SABOTAGED ELECTRONICALLY JUST AS I BEGAN MY DESCENT.
INDEED, MOMENTS LATER...
HO HO! NOW TO GIVE GEN. MCFARLAND AND THOSE IMBECILIC ZONE RIDERS THE SURPRISE OF THEIR LIVES!
8

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

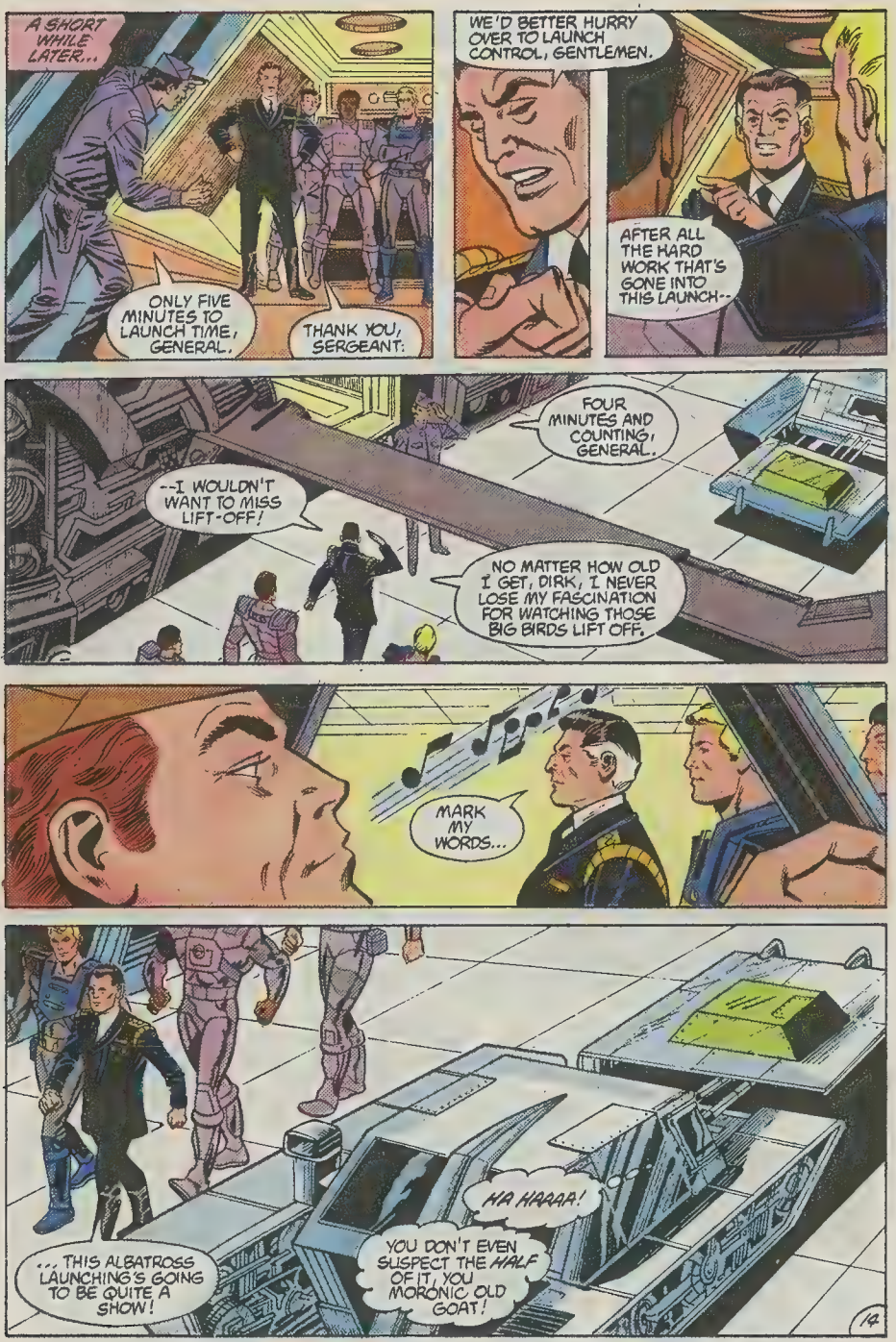
MEANTIME...
CURSE THAT MELTZER! WHAT THE HECK'S TAKING HIM SO--
AHA! THERE IT IS! CLEAR AS DAY AGAIN!
DIDN'T GIVE YOU ANY TROUBLE, DID IT, ARNIE?
NAH! PIECE'A CAKE!
WHILE BACK IN THE AMAZON...
HAHAAA! MY STATUE'S NEARLY FINISHED, SCHMIDT--
--BUT I'M GONNA MISS WATCHING YOU WORK LIKE A DOG!
DOUBLE-TIME IT, SLAVE! I WANT TO SEE YOU REALLY RUN WITH IT!
I-I AM TRYING... MASTER...!
BUT THE STONE IS TOO... HEAVY...!
I CANNOT...
UHRH.
CLUMSY OAF!
GET UP!

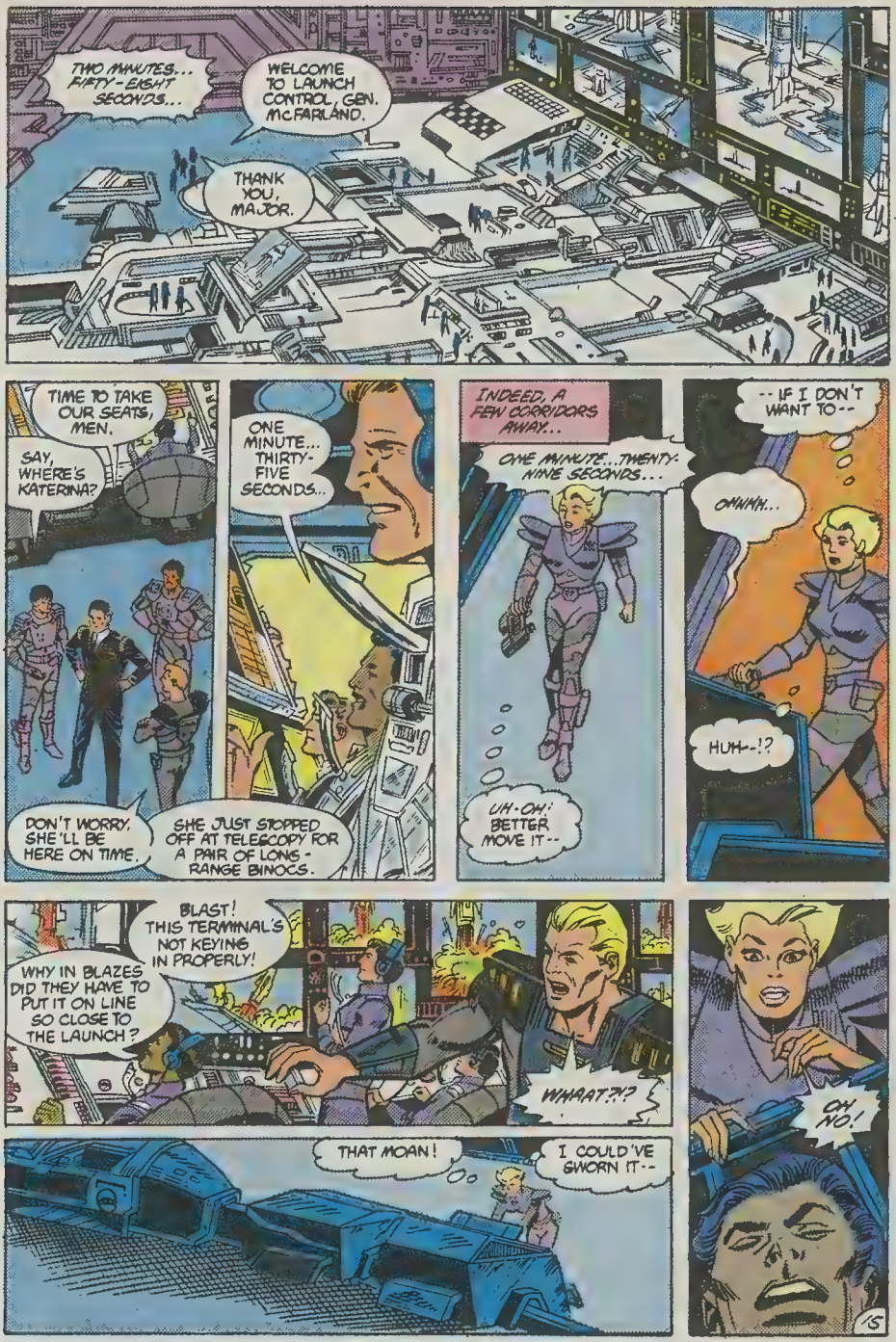

BLAST YOU, SCHMIDT! ON YOUR FEET...
OHH -- WHERE AM I?
...OR SO HELP ME, I'LL TAKE EXTREME PERSONAL DELIGHT--
-AARRHH!
FORGOTTEN A CERTAIN MESSY LITTLE DETAIL, HAVEN'T YOU, SCHWEINHUNDT?
CHOK
MOMENTS AFTER THAT ZONE HELMET FLEW OFF MY HEAD--
--I CEASED BEING YOUR OBEDIENT LITTLE AUTOMATON!
MY STUN GUN! GIVE--
THW
UHHRR--
HE HAS HURT OUR... MASTER...!
THW
STOP HIM!
THW
AAAAH!
GOT TO MAKE MY WAY BACK TO MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL! BUT--BUT HOW?
10


WAIT! THAT BLACK WIDOW TRANSPORT SHUTTLE! IT MUST BE THE VEHICLE THEY USED TO FLY US HERE!
NO CHANCE TO RESCUE THE OTHER ZONERS! THOSE GUARDS PACK TOO MUCH FIREPOWER!
THE FACT IS, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE IN THE WORLD I AM--
SLAVE! HALT! YOU--
GHAAAA!
--BUT THERE'LL BE ENOUGH TIME TO GET MY BEARINGS STRAIGHT ONCE I'M SAFELY AIRBORNE!
THESE CONTROLS! COMPLICATED! I JUST PRAY I CAN--
AHA!
FIVE...
...FOUR...
...THREE...
...TWO...
STOP!!
WOOOOOSH!
11

MEANWHILE, BACK AT MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL...
THIS IS WHERE THEY STORE ALL THEIR SPARE COMPUTER HARDWARE.
JUST GOTTA FIND THE RIGHT--
YOU! SOLDIER!
UH-OH!
WHAT DEPARTMENT ARE YOU FROM?
WHO GAVE YOU AUTH--
THWW
AAGGHH!
IN YOU GO!
OKAY, NOW WHERE WAS I?
OH YEAH! I'D JUST FINISHED SORTING OUT THE TERMINAL I NEED.
JUST A FEW MINOR ADJUSTMENTS AND THIS BABY'LL BE ALL SET TO GO.
HASTILY WRENCHING OPEN THE COMPUTER CRATE, BANDIT SETS FEVERISHLY TO WORK...
AND MOMENTS LATER...
HA HAAA! LAUNCH CONTROL ROOM, HERE I COME!

WHILE IN THE AMAZON...
OVERLORD! RAZORBACK HERE! WORK ON MY STATUE'S COMPLETED!
ONE SMALL PROBLEM... SGT. SCHMIDT'S, ER, ESCAPED.
ESCAPED!? HOW?
NO, NEVER MIND! IT DOESN'T MATTER!
ALL THAT MATTERS NOW IS THAT ALL FIVE STATUES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED--
"...AND THAT THE HOUR OF OUR GREATEST GLORY IS FAST APPROACHING--!!"
CORPORAL MELTZER REPORTING, SIR.
I'M HERE TO REPLACE ONE OF THE LAUNCH CONTROL TERMINALS FOR THE ALBATROSS SATELLITE.
ARE YOU CERTAIN, CORPORAL?
BUT WHY?
YESSIR. I AM, SIR.
ALL OUR UNITS ARE FUNCTIONING PERFECTLY!
THERE'S NO CONCEIVABLE--
DR. LAURENCE'S ORDERS, SIR.


A SHORT WHILE LATER...
ONLY FIVE MINUTES TO LAUNCH TIME, GENERAL.
THANK YOU, SERGEANT.
WE'D BETTER HURRY OVER TO LAUNCH CONTROL, GENTLEMEN.
AFTER ALL THE HARD WORK THAT'S GONE INTO THIS LAUNCH--
FOUR MINUTES AND COUNTING, GENERAL.
--I WOULDN'T WANT TO MISS LIFT-OFF!
NO MATTER HOW OLD I GET, DIRK, I NEVER LOSE MY FASCINATION FOR WATCHING THOSE BIG BIRDS LIFT OFF.
MARK MY WORDS...
... THIS ALBATROSS LAUNCHING'S GOING TO BE QUITE A SHOW!
HA HAAAA!
YOU DON'T EVEN SUSPECT THE HALF OF IT, YOU MORONIC OLD GOAT!

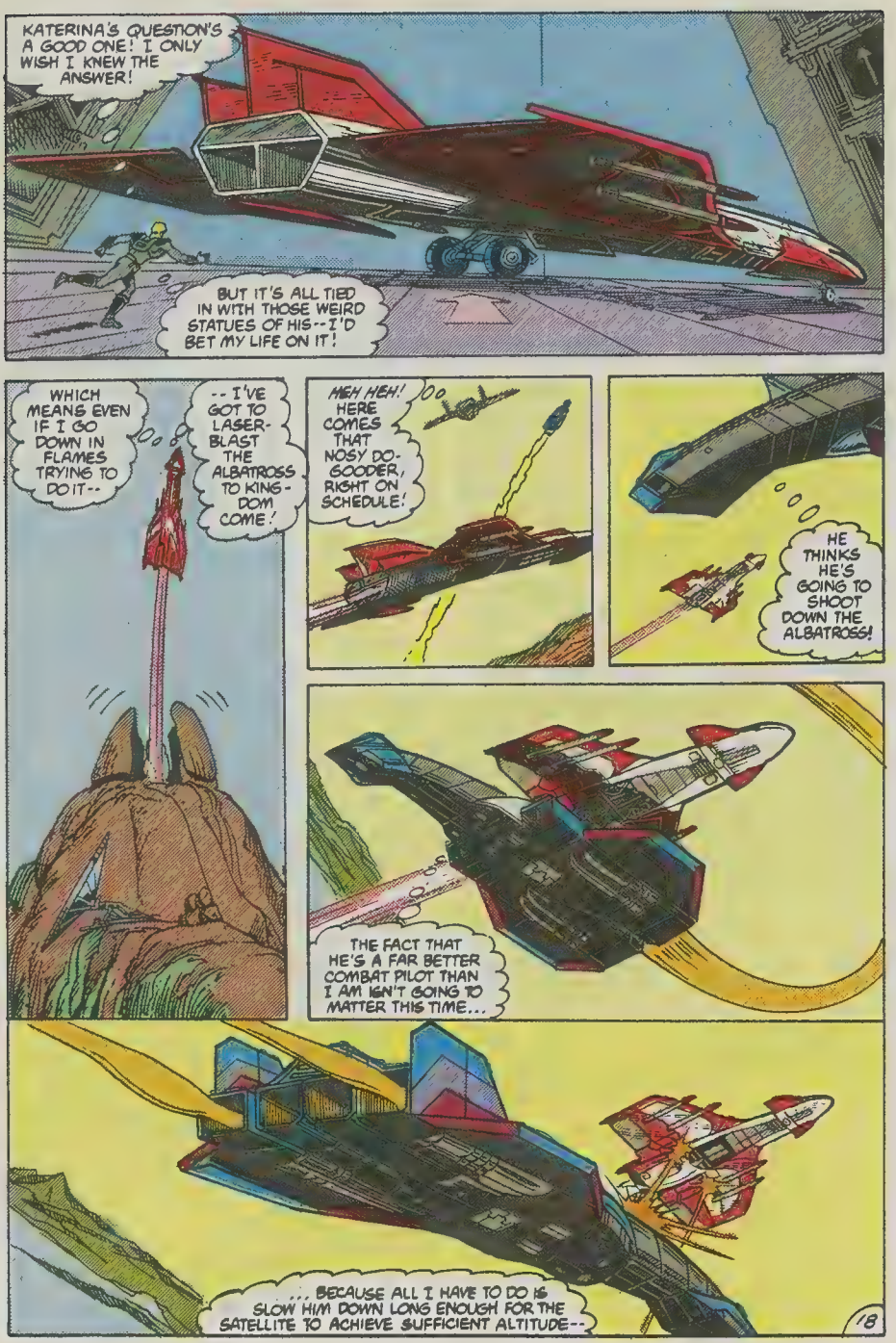

TWO MINUTES... FIFTY-EIGHT SECONDS...
WELCOME TO LAUNCH CONTROL, GEN. McFARLAND.
THANK YOU, MAJOR.
TIME TO TAKE OUR SEATS, MEN.
SAY, WHERE'S KATERINA?
DON'T WORRY, SHE'LL BE HERE ON TIME.
ONE MINUTE... THIRTY-FIVE SECONDS...
SHE JUST STOPPED OFF AT TELESCOPY FOR A PAIR OF LONG-RANGE BINOCS.
INDEED, A FEW CORRIDORS AWAY...
ONE MINUTE...TWENTY-NINE SECONDS...
UH-OH! BETTER MOVE IT--
-- IF I DON'T WANT TO--
OHHHH...
HUH--!?
BLAST! THIS TERMINAL'S NOT KEYING IN PROPERLY!
WHY IN BLAZES DID THEY HAVE TO PUT IT ON LINE SO CLOSE TO THE LAUNCH?
WHAAT?!?
THAT MOAN!
I COULD'VE SWORN IT--
OH NO!
15

GEN. McFARLAND! HAVE A LOOK AT THIS TERMINAL! SOMEONE'S--
COMMANDER! TROUBLE! A PAIR OF STUN-VICTIMS OVER AT COMPUTER SUPPLY! THEY--
GREAT SCOTT! THAT DOES IT!
STOP THE COUNTDOWN! ABORT THE LAUNCH!
...TWO.. ONE... IGNITION!
WE CAN'T, DIRK!
IT'S TOO LATE!
LIFT-OFF! WE HAVE A LIFT-OFF!
TRAJECTORY COEFFICIENT POINT ZERO... ZERO...NINER!
LAUNCH APPEARS A-OKAY! SHE'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR HER ORBIT!
NO! LOOK!

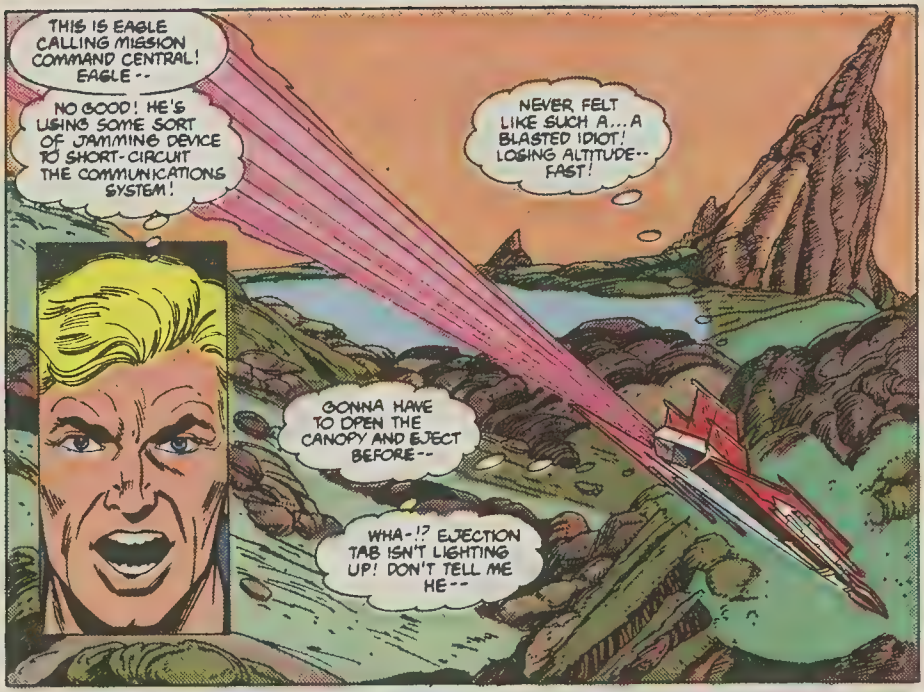
16

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

SHE'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR EARTH ORBIT, ALL RIGHT-- ONLY IT'S NOT THE RIGHT ORBIT!
ABORT THE MISSION! ABORT THE SATELLITE!
WE CAN'T DO IT, COMMANDER! THAT BOGUS TERMINAL HAS PUT A MAJOR GLITCH IN OUR ENTIRE SYSTEM!
SOMEONE OUTSIDE MCC IS CONTROLLING THE ALBATROSS!
HEH HEHHH! INDEED SOMEONE IS, MY FOOLISH FRIENDS!
AND THAT SOMEONE IS ME!
OVERLORD! HE--HE WOULDN'T DARE!
I'M AFRAID HE ALREADY HAS, GENERAL! LOOK AT THE SCREEN!
HE'S OVERHEAD IN THE INTRUDER, MANEUVERING THE ALBATROSS INTO AN ORBIT OF HIS OWN CHOOSING!
BUT WHY, COMMANDER?
IF HE WANTS TO STOP THE ALBATROSS, WHY DOESN'T HE JUST DESTROY IT?
HEH HEH! MUSTN'T BE IMPATIENT, MY DEAR! YOU'LL LEARN THAT ALL IN GOOD TIME!

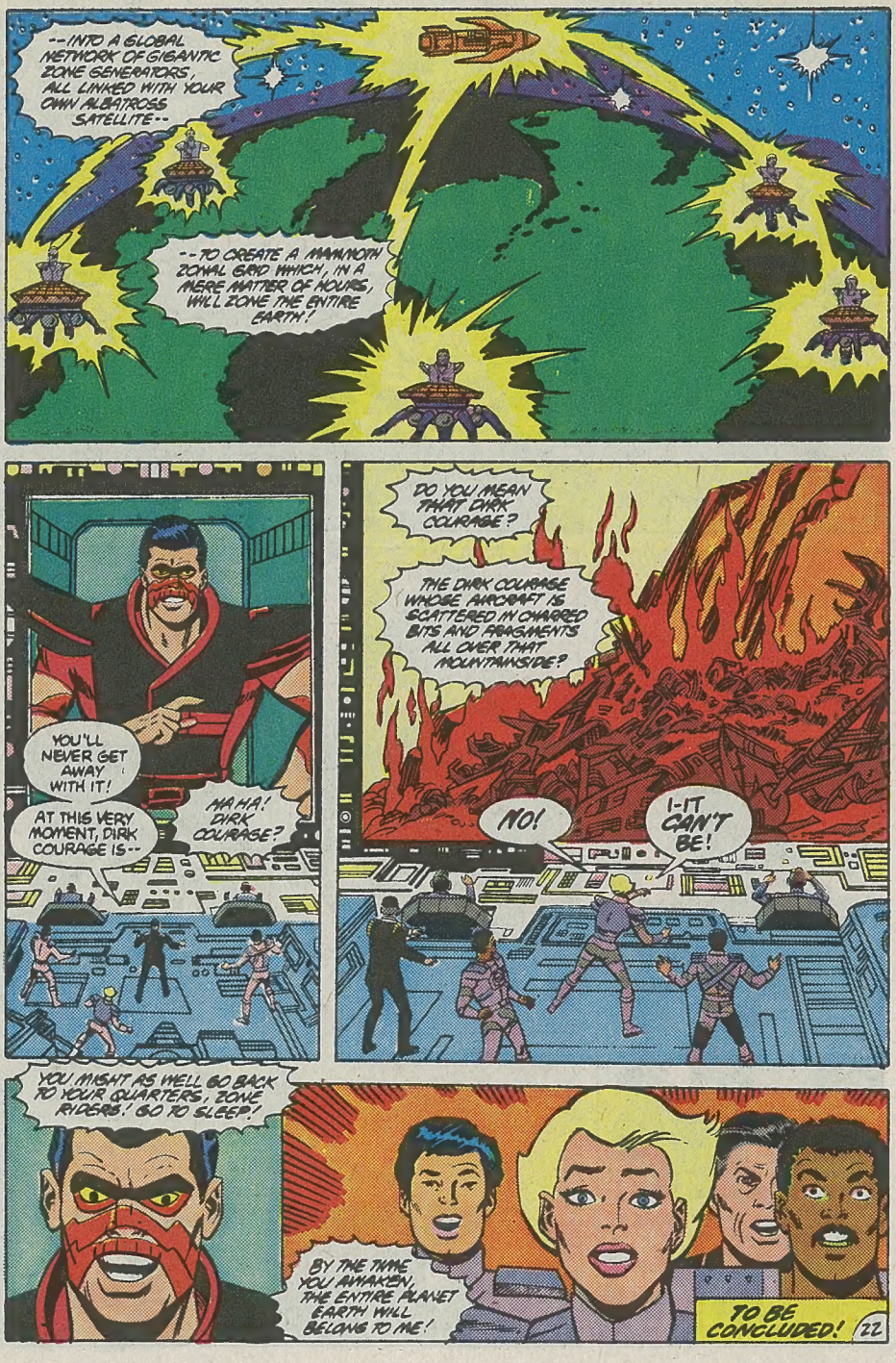

KATERINA'S QUESTION'S A GOOD ONE! I ONLY WISH I KNEW THE ANSWER!
BUT IT'S ALL TIED IN WITH THOSE WEIRD STATUES OF HIS--I'D BET MY LIFE ON IT!
WHICH MEANS EVEN IF I GO DOWN IN FLAMES TRYING TO DO IT--
--I'VE GOT TO LASER-BLAST THE ALBATROSS TO KING-DOM COME!
MEH MEH! HERE COMES THAT NOSY DO-GOODER, RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!
HE THINKS HE'S GOING TO SHOOT DOWN THE ALBATROSS!
THE FACT THAT HE'S A FAR BETTER COMBAT PILOT THAN I AM ISN'T GOING TO MATTER THIS TIME...
... BECAUSE ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SLOW HIM DOWN LONG ENOUGH FOR THE SATELLITE TO ACHIEVE SUFFICIENT ALTITUDE--

--TO BE ABLE TO DO WHAT I (HEH HEHHH) WANT IT TO DO! ONCE THAT'S ACCOMPLISHED--
--I HAVE A SPECIAL LITTLE SURPRISE ALL PREPARED FOR MY FAVORITE ZONE RIDER!
AMONG BANDIT'S VARIOUS OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS TODAY...
...WAS USING HIS TECHNICIAN'S DISGUISE AND STOLEN CREDENTIALS TO INFILTRATE THE EAGLE'S HANGAR...
...AND MAKE SOME INGENIOUS ELECTRONIC ADJUSTMENTS TO THE CONTROLS OF COMMANDER COURAGE'S AIRCRAFT!
KLAK
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THROTTLE'S JAMMED!
BACKUPS AREN'T RESPONDING EITHER!
SOMEONE'S SABOTAGED THE LINES!


THIS IS EAGLE CALLING MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL! EAGLE--
NO GOOD! HE'S USING SOME SORT OF JAMMING DEVICE TO SHORT-CIRCUIT THE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM!
NEVER FELT LIKE SUCH A...A BLASTED IDIOT! LOSING ALTITUDE--FAST!
GONNA HAVE TO OPEN THE CANOPY AND EJECT BEFORE--
WHA-!? EJECTION TAB ISN'T LIGHTING UP! DON'T TELL ME HE--

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

TIME TO WAKE UP, FOOLS!
I'VE SOMETHING FASCINATING TO SHOW YOU!
IT'S OVERLORD, GENERAL! HE--HE'S PATCHED HIMSELF INTO OUR COM-SAT LINK!
WHAT DO YOU WANT, UGLY?
MEH HEHHH! JUST KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE TELE-SCREEN, GENERAL.
WHAT YOU'RE SEEING NOW... IS A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF ONE OF THE GIANT STATUES I'VE ERECTED AROUND THE WORLD!
YOU THOUGHT THEY WERE MERE MONUMENTS TO MYSELF AND MY HENCH-MEN!
AS YOU ARE SEEING NOW, THEY ARE FAR, FAR MORE THAN THAT!
NOTICE HOW INGENIOUSLY THEY HAVE BEGUN SHIFTING... CHANGING...TRANS-FORMING BY DEGREES..


--INTO A GLOBAL NETWORK OF GIGANTIC ZONE GENERATORS, ALL LINKED WITH YOUR OWN ALBATROSS SATELLITE--
--TO CREATE A MAMMOTH ZONAL GRID WHICH, IN A MERE MATTER OF HOURS, WILL ZONE THE ENTIRE EARTH!
YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT!
AT THIS VERY MOMENT, DIRK COURAGE IS--
HA HA! DIRK COURAGE?
DO YOU MEAN THAT DIRK COURAGE?
THE DIRK COURAGE WHOSE AIRCRAFT IS SCATTERED IN CHARRED BITS AND FRAGMENTS ALL OVER THAT MOUNTAINSIDE?
NO!
I-IT CAN'T BE!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO BACK TO YOUR QUARTERS, ZONE RIDERS! GO TO SLEEP!
BY THE TYME YOU AWAKEN, THE ENTIRE PLANET EARTH WILL BELONG TO ME!
TO BE CONCLUDED!

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L-3020

Memorandum
To: United Nations Security Council
From: General Steven Q. McFarland
Mission Command Central
Subject: Overlord and the Black Widows

More and more information is rapidly becoming declassified concerning the reprehensible terrorists who have appropriated the area we have come to know as the Spiral Zone. I'm speaking specifically of Overlord and his henchmen who call their strike team "the Black Widows."

As you may know, it is our great shame that this "Overlord" as he calls himself, Dr. James Bent, is a local product. This may sound to an outsider like 20-20 hindsight, but my observation is, I always knew this man was going to be trouble. The only question was how much trouble.

Dr. Bent came to work at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Military Research Space Facility with quite a background: Ph.D.s in genetics, pharmacology and psychology from Stanford at the age of 23. He received his Ph.D. in quantum physics two years later. In retrospect, it's easy to see the seeds of a more sinister purpose being sown in this fertile mind.

His mad and grandiose plan to enslave the entire world under the guise of bringing it a new order was hatched during these years. His odyssey during this time was unprecedented: he defected to the Soviet Union, then returned to America and was actually welcomed back to the fold, albeit somewhat suspiciously.

You already know what happened soon after. The Zone. The purpose of this memo is not to rehash the past, however. Instead, let us look at the background of Overlord's Black Widows.

The man known as Bandit once held another alias. We do not know his true name, but he was once recognized by the world as "Carlos," an international terrorist. All the information to date on Carlos is extremely sketchy. As far as our research indicates, he was raised by roving desert bandits, soon becoming their leader, hence his later adopted name. He speaks several languages, and is a master of disguise. Only a handful of photographs of him exist and we cannot even be sure they are all of the same person.

After leaving the desert bandits because of his overwhelmingly inflated ambitions, he learned the tactics of terrorism, studying the strategies of such groups as Black September, and even joining a few loosely knit terrorist organizations. Most notably, he headed the SKR, the group who claimed responsibility for the Matte Grosso Affair of 1990, the Ossetian Military Road Attack of 1996 and the dawn raid at the NATO HQ at Izmir, Turkey, of 2004. In the last of these, rumor had it that Carlos had been killed.

Not so. Carlos later resurfaced as the supervising military strategist in the Desert Wars, where he first went up against Commander Dirk Courage. He lost a critical battle to Courage, one in which Carlos' brother was killed. Carlos swore to avenge his brother's death, and has since undertaken a personal vendetta against Commander Courage.

Carlos later joined forces with Overlord, and as a measure of respect for Carlos' estimable expertise in warfare, he made Carlos his second-in-command. It is at this point that Carlos took "Bandit" as his *nom de guerre*.

The Black Widow who calls himself Reaper, formerly known as Matthew Riles, was born to a wealthy family in Denver, Colorado. His family's money made it possible for him to graduate high school without a police record.

His superior intellect and his father's political pull gained him an appointment to West Point, where it was hoped that military discipline would straighten him out.

No such luck. Disciplined several times for various infractions, he was court-martialed and expelled after two-and -a- half years there. He was sentenced to fourteen years in Leavenworth Federal Prison for forcing a plebe into a game of Russian Roulette with a laser pistol. Fortunately for his intended victim, other cadets intervened in time.

Riles had no intention of serving one day of his sentence. While being transported to Leavenworth, he caused the pneumatic tube train carrying him to crash, and escaped in the confusion. He fled the country and became a mercenary, selling his services to the highest bidder.

He became the highest paid mercenary in the world, recruiting and training armies as well as fighting among them.

Reaper deeply resents the fact that he was not made Overlord's second-in-command. He feels that this is an oversight that can be corrected, however.

Al Krak, a.k.a. Razorback, was a street tough during his early years on the streets of Newark and New York City. By the age of fourteen, he had spent most of his life in reform schools. A few years later, he rose to the command of a street gang known as the Laughing Gentlemen.

After retreating from a particularly vicious street brawl on his turbo-chopper, Krak collided with a speeding bullet train, and spent the next six months recuperating from extensive reconstructive surgery. His face still bears the evidence of the accident.

Krak has a rap sheet a mile long, filled with arrests for assault, battery, robbery, carrying a concealed weapon, extortion, arson and other related charges. He has few convictions: the result of witnesses being afraid of retribution if they should testify against him.

Razorback has one outstanding trait: a fascination and skill devoted to blades of any sort. He kept an arsenal of blades collected from all over the world. They have become his trademark. He can throw blades with frightening pinpoint accuracy. He is also formidable in hand-to-hand combat.

Duchess Dire, the only female member of the Black Widows, attended some of the finest schools in the world; notably in Switzerland, Sweden, France and her native England. She was generally expelled from all of them.

When she was old enough, she quit school altogether and embarked on a journey around the world. She was always bored, and turned to crime to relieve her boredom. She was indicted on several counts in half a dozen countries, but in most cases she fled the country before charges could be brought, and bribed her way out of the charges in still other countries.

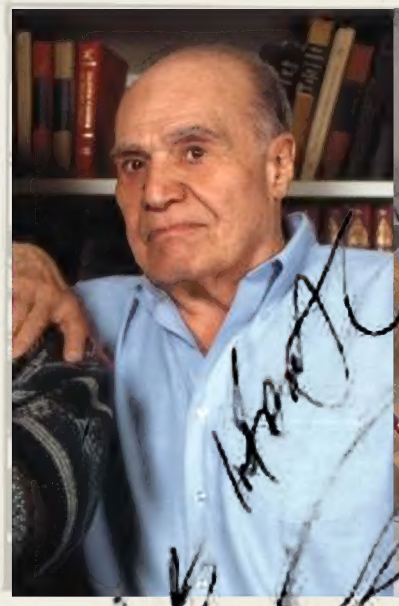
The Duchess has no military background or war experience to speak of. She was outside the Spiral Zone when the first of the pods fell.

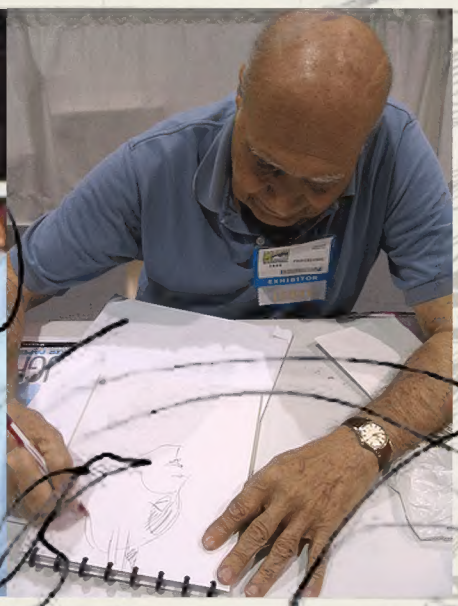
Believe it or not, she entered the Spiral Zone of her own volition. The Duchess is attracted to power, and Overlord is now the single most powerful force on the planet. She saw in Overlord the quickest way to power, an absolute power that would certainly end the poor little rich girl's boredom.

Overlord is reportedly attracted to the Duchess. The feeling, we're told, is not mutual. She does enjoy basking in his reflected glory.

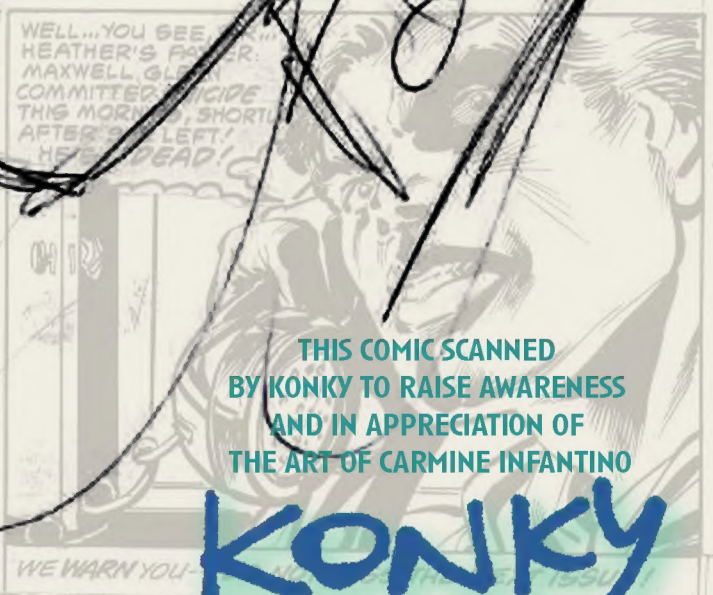
The other Black Widows don't trust her, and regard her as a threat. But the Duchess knows how to get them on her side as well.

To sum up, the Black Widows are dangerous, ruthless and inordinately cunning. It will take everything the Zone Riders have to defeat them and destroy the Spiral Zone forever.





"UH, HEATHER GLENN ISN'T HERE
THE MOMENT! THIS IS MATT MURDOC
"OH! I'VE HEARD OF YO MR. MURDOCK YOU'RE MS. GLENN'S ATTORNEY I--I GUESS I CAN TELL YOU..."
"TELL ME WHAT?"



THIS COMIC SCANNED
BY KONKY TO RAISE AWARENESS
AND IN APPRECIATION OF
THE ART OF CARMINE INFANTINO

KONKY